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Office of the Director of Central Intelligence

SP - 56/74  
10 May 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: See Distribution

SUBJECT: Interagency Meeting on Proposed National Intelligence  
Production on Strategic Programs, July-December 1974

1. As you recall, research managers from the Intelligence community agencies met with me last January to discuss and approve a proposed program of national intelligence production on strategic programs for January-July 1974. A number of the projects scheduled at that time are still underway. Nevertheless, it is not too early to begin thinking about our national intelligence production program for the second half of the year, especially inasmuch as individual agencies are already preparing their work programs for the next fiscal year. Moreover, the question of the major year-end estimates on strategic forces needs to be resolved.

2. I request that the same group of intelligence research managers again convene, with the addition of representatives from Army, Navy, Air Force and the AEC. An agenda for such a meeting is attached as well as two papers you may wish to study prior to the meeting. Progress reports on various aspects of NIO/SP activity will be handed out at the meeting.

3. I propose to hold this meeting on 22 May from 1000 to 1200 in Room 7-E-62, CIA Headquarters. I would be grateful if you could reserve this date on your calendar and plan to attend personally.

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National Intelligence Officer  
for Strategic Programs

Attachments:  
Three as stated

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PROPOSED AGENDA FOR NIO/SP PLANNING MEETING

- I. Report by NIO/SP on status of current work program and ad hoc projects. (Hand out at meeting)
- II. Report by NIO/SP on projections issue and solution. (Hand out at meeting)
- III. Discussion of proposal to prepare consolidated survey of Soviet Strategic Forces in 1974. (Attachment)
- IV. Discussion of proposed work program for period July-December 1974. (Attachment)
- V. Other Business

## NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES

### ON SOVIET STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE FORCES:

#### A COMBINED APPROACH FOR 1974

1. In considering national intelligence production related to strategic programs during 1974, the NIO has attempted to encourage improved responsiveness to the needs of the policymaker and flexibility in various publications to allow for changing circumstances. A combination of circumstances suggests that the interests of Intelligence as well as those of the policymaker would be best served this year by combining the NIEs on Soviet strategic offensive and defensive forces into one document comprising a survey of Soviet strategic forces.

2. There are several factors which commend this approach this year in particular:

- both NIE 11-3 and NIE 11-8 must be done this year; the last NIE 11-3 was done in 1972, and a Memorandum to Holders was prepared in 1973;
- in recent months, policymakers have emphasized the need for brevity in strategic estimates; integration would help to meet that need;
- recently, PFIAB was critical of certain key judgments in NIE 11-8; their criticism would have been mitigated and perhaps avoided had strategic offensive and defensive aspects of the threat been integrated into one estimate and that integration reflected in the key judgments.

3. Other factors not peculiar to this year also support an integrated approach:

- treatment of offensive and defensive forces in the same document would assure that new developments and forecasts in either field would be taken into account in analyzing the other and could produce improvements in analyses of current strategic forces as well as future force structures and threats;
- a single document surveying Soviet strategic forces could enhance the value of the estimate to the policymaker, who would then have readily available a concise but comprehensive assessment of Soviet strategic capabilities and intentions;

--integration could provide some economies in time, paperwork, personnel and length of document at least sufficient to diminish somewhat the "annual agony."

4. Such a survey of Soviet strategic capabilities needs to take into account policy relevant topics and expressions of particular interest made known in recent months, and to focus especially on areas of uncertainty in earlier versions of NIE 11-8 and NIE 11-3. In addition, the changing US nuclear strategy as expressed in NSDM 242 has given new significance to some aspects of the threat, for example, Soviet nuclear war fighting capabilities--both what that means and Soviet doctrine pertinent to it--as well as Soviet attack assessment capabilities and capabilities for strategic warning. On the other hand, the survey should not broadly expand the scope of either NIE 11-8-73 or NIE 11-3-72, for example, to include Soviet capabilities for peripheral attack.

5. As noted above, policymakers have stated quite firmly their preference for brief, policy relevant estimates on strategic forces. Therefore, a strategic survey or estimate this year should be held to 20-30 pages if possible. For example, particular emphasis can be placed on brevity in the description of what is already known about Soviet strategic forces. Supporting analysis should be published separately as annexes to the Estimate. The supporting analysis in 1974 should take into account the findings of current interagency research on the following specific topics of previous uncertainty and/or disagreement:

--ICBM and SLBM accuracies;

--capabilities and employment of Backfire;

--Soviet laser research, particularly as it relates to strategic defense applications;

--Soviet capabilities for detection and localization of submarines in open ocean areas.

6. As with any new approach to a problem, organizational difficulties can be expected. Nevertheless, the objective would be to keep the entire process as simple and straightforward as possible. Descriptive sections on offensive and defensive forces can be treated separately in the survey and can be prepared as in the past. The principal work of integration should be in the Key Judgments section and the Force Implications section, both based upon the other sections of the paper.